TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

March 3, 2003 LB 54

By removing the licensing training requirements for relatives only, we believe that more relatives will become licensed foster homes rather than approved foster homes. It is the department...and he says, although the bill would allow the department to waive training requirements for relatives, it would be our goal to continue to encourage relatives take advantage of the training opportunities. Now certainly what Senator Erdman did say was that any way that we can provide long-term placements, the state is going to be better off by doing so We do have too many that are having four, five, six, seven placements during their growing into adulthood, and so it was thought that perhaps a family member ... and, by the way, relatives is not really described or it isn't set out as to what a relative is in the state foster care statutes that we have, so that is not in there. Maybe it should be, as defining exactly what a relative is. But it was really hoped that a relative might hang in there a little longer or perhaps might have a closeness to the individual in foster care that would provide longer and better care and, yes, then it does allow us, and we always need, more dollars in foster care from the federal government to allow us to attract some of those IV-E funds. a small amendment after this that would allow the have department to either waive all or partial. It's a very simple amendment and I did that in really recognition of what Senator Raikes here is trying to achieve. I really don't think that we have a problem with relatives. The department is going to watch this on a case-by-case basis, not blanket, and so I think it does offer the foster care system still the oversight that we're interested in, but hopefully...and we have a shortage of foster care providers, that this will help with that and then being a member of the family, being a relative, you might have a little more interest, a little more closeness of what that might I might mention in the bill it does say that...what the includes, including but not limited to abuse, neglected, dependent and delinquent children. So these are kids that really...I'll tell you what's really missing more than anything else is love and compassion, and hopefully a relative maybe can add to that. We have some great foster care parents in this state, outstanding, and they do it for remuneration. They're really not paid what they should be paid, but...and that will always be the case. But, still, we try to